

SACRAMENTO ETHNIC COMMUNITIES SURVEY

PORTUGUESE

Date: February 7, 1984

Place: Portuguese Hall
6676 Pocket Road
Sacramento, CA 95831

Subject: CLARENCE NEVIS

Interviewer: Joe D'Alessandro

- :00 Introduction
- :45 Talks about birth (26 June 1911). Discusses parents: Manuel Nevis born in North Sacramento, Mary Dutra Nevis born in Yuba County.
- 2:50 Discusses early life on farm in the Pocket area, what they raised and how they worked behind a team of horses.
- 3:00 Family sold crops to market in Sacramento. Farm was 42 - 43 acres.
- 3:45 Farm was in the north Pocket with Seamas' Granger's Dairy to the north and Joe Neves to the south.
- 4:20 Went to the Upper Lisbon School, teachers included Mrs. Applegate, Mrs. Seymore and Mrs. Sweeny. 99% of the children at the Lisbon schools were Portuguese. There were also some Japanese and two Sweeds.
- 6:15 Virtually all of the farmers in the area were Portuguese.
- 6:50 The Holy Spirit Festivals or "Festas" were the main event of the year. He would get a quarter to spend that would last all day.
- 7:50 There would be the parade where they would pick up the crown and take it to church.
- 8:30 Killing the pigs was another major event. They would made a big dinner, drink, play cards, and cut and prepare the meat to make linguica and morcella. They would also make salt pork, bacon and ham.
- 10:15 At home they would eat home-made breads, beans, potatoes, salt pork, salt fish, salt beef. Because of refrigeration they would eat alot of salted meats but would eat fresh meats when an animal was killed.
- 10:55 They fished on the river and got alot of Salmon. Sometimes they would eat salmon 3 times a day. The salmon were sometimes over 50 pounds. There were some commercial fisherman, including his dad, who sold their fish at Meridith Fish Company.
- 11:55 They bought most of their groceries at DaRosa Groceries in the Pocket. In town they would shop at Nordeste's Market. Would go to Tony Williams and Joe Silva barbershops.
- 12:50 At New Year's they would have a big dance in their home. They would have sweet bread and linguica sandwiches. They would play cards, drink, eat, and have a good time.
- 13:40 Every Saturday they would have traditional Portuguese dances called "Chamarritas" at people's homes. They would have parties.
- 14:40 At the Portuguese Hall they would also have dances on Saturday nights, especially in the winter. In the summer there wasn't as much time to party because one had to work.
- 15:00 Discusses how the Portuguese from different areas of town would not always get along well. There were little fights between the Portuguese in the Pocket and those in the "Arizona" neighborhood downtown.

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- 15:40 When they went to church on Sunday they would go to St. Mary's. They kids would always go but sometimes the parents had to work on Sundays.
- 16:25 The Sacramento Brickyards was the major means of employment besides the farms for the people of the area. There were 50 - 60 employees.
- 17:15 Discusses slaughterhouse owned by Faustino Silva that he bought from a German man named Jerry. When Faustino purchased it he greatly expanded it and furnished it with electricity. Employed 5 people.
- 18:20 Grangers Dairy was also a major area of employment. Had 60 cows, pasturized own milk, had delivery trucks. Had at least 6 employees.
- 19:30 Clarence Nevis went to school until 8th grade, worked on farm until 1939 and moved to Franklin Blvd. Worked in Perkins area winery then went into army. Came back from army in 1945 and worked at army depot for over 25 years. Returned to Pocket area in 1977 moved into Frank Perry's place.
- 21:35 Now lives next door to old family farm. Nothing in the area is the same anymore because of development.
- 22:20 Feel sad to see the changes. Only a few original families live there now.
- 23:15 Never felt discrimination being Portuguese.
- 23:50 Recent immigrant Portuguese moving back to the area. Mass is said in Portuguese every Sunday at St. Mary's. New immigrants help to maintain culture. Festas are now bigger than ever.
- 25:05 Recent immigrants get along pretty well with older families.
- 25:45 Always spoke Portuguese at home but after awhile this changed. New Immigrants help because they speak Portuguese.
- 27:00 His parents had 15 children. Clarence was fifth from the bottom.
- 29:20 His mother and aunt were mid-wives. At least 25 children were born in his home.